

CLONING, SEQUENCING AND CHARACTERIZATION
OF TWO CELL DEATH GENES AND USES THEREFOR

Abstract of the Disclosure

Described herein are genes shown to be essential
5 for programmed cell death in *C. elegans*, their encoded
products (RNA and polypeptides), antibodies directed
against the encoded polypeptides; probes for
identifying structurally related genes and bioassays
for identifying functionally related cell death genes
10 from various organisms; methods and agents for altering
(increasing or decreasing) the activity of the cell
death genes and, thus, of altering cell death; and uses
therefor. Specifically, two genes shown to be
essential for almost all of the cell deaths which occur
15 in the development of *C. elegans*, referred to as *ced-3*
and *ced-4*, have been cloned, sequenced and
characterized.